

## Question 9: Positive Feedback — What Helped Participants Learn

Participants' open-ended feedback emphasized the **Challenge Clinic** as the most powerful and memorable learning component of the program. Nearly all respondents (about 90%) specifically mentioned the Challenge Clinic as the aspect of the session that most helped them learn or gave them practical insights to apply in their work. Participants consistently described it as *engaging, relevant, and immediately applicable* to their professional roles. The structure of the Challenge Clinic—balancing presentation, modeling, and practice—was frequently cited as the ideal format for professional learning. The exercise not only fostered active engagement but also encouraged reflection, peer-to-peer exchange, and confidence in applying soft-skill frameworks in their own settings.

A strong theme across responses (about 75%) was participants' **intent to adopt or replicate the Challenge Clinic model** in their own work with colleagues, advisory teams, or farm clients. Many participants wrote that they planned to use the format in upcoming trainings, meetings, or peer sessions. For example, one respondent noted, *“Really liked the Challenge Clinic and will definitely use it with colleagues.”* Another wrote, *“All of the session was relevant and will be used in practice. Really enjoyed the Challenge Clinic and will use it in our monthly service provider meeting.”* This indicates that the Challenge Clinic not only enhanced immediate learning but also serves as a transferable model with potential to multiply the program's impact across the professional network.

Another prevalent theme (approximately 60% of responses) highlighted the value of **peer learning and networking** opportunities embedded in the Challenge Clinic and broader session. Participants appreciated the chance to share experiences, receive validation from peers, and gain diverse perspectives from other agricultural service providers. Comments such as, *“Great group of people and well-organized session made discussion really productive,”* and *“Connecting with other service providers was validating and solidified that farmers can do what we ask,”* reflect the professional and emotional reinforcement that came from shared problem-solving and dialogue.

About a quarter of participants (25%) mentioned the **“fishbowl” structure and modeling of practice** as a particularly useful feature, describing it as an effective way to see new facilitation and communication techniques demonstrated in real time. One participant explained, *“I appreciated the ‘fishbowl’ concept to see new skills in action in real time,”* while another remarked, *“Appreciated the balance between presentation, modeling of Challenge Clinic practice, and practice session of doing a Challenge Clinic.”* These comments suggest that observing facilitators model desired behaviors was as valuable as participating directly in the activity itself.

Approximately 20% of responses also praised the **balance between structured presentation and active practice**, noting that the session's design successfully combined information delivery with experiential learning. As one participant summarized, *“Appreciated the balance between presentation, modeling of Challenge Clinic practice, and practice session of doing a Challenge Clinic.”* Others noted that this mix kept the day engaging and accessible, with one writing, *“I enjoyed the approach of not listening to a lecture/slide show for the whole day.”* This aligns well with adult learning principles, reinforcing that participants benefit most when they can see, discuss, and practice new techniques within the same session.

Finally, almost every response (close to 100%) indicated that the **content was relevant and applicable** to participants' work as educators and advisors. Many explicitly stated that they would integrate insights from the Challenge Clinic into their own programming, training sessions, or farm-client consultations. The following remarks illustrate this sense of immediate usefulness: *"Excellent examples of situations faced that are relevant to my practice; input and comments from attendees was also valuable,"* and *"The Challenge Clinic was great, loved the structure it provided and included everyone."* Several participants also praised logistical details that supported their experience, such as *"Pre-email was great. Super helpful parking instructions and I love that!"*, reflecting thoughtful planning and participant-centered design.

Taken together, these qualitative findings underscore the **Challenge Clinic's role as both a learning experience and a transferable professional development model**. It provided participants with a structured, interactive, and peer-driven method that they plan to adopt in their own advisory and educational settings. The responses reflect deep engagement, validation of professional practice, and strong alignment between training design and adult learning best practices. In short, participants left not only more skilled and confident but also equipped with a tool they are eager to share and implement—demonstrating the program's multiplier effect and sustained impact beyond the initial training event.

## **Question 10: Trainer Feedback — Constructive Reflections on the Learning Experience**

Participants' open-ended feedback on the trainer and session design was overwhelmingly positive and constructive. Respondents consistently praised the trainer's expertise, organization, and delivery, while also offering thoughtful suggestions to enhance engagement, pacing, and use of participant expertise in future sessions. The overall tone reflected deep appreciation for the professional facilitation balanced by a clear interest in expanding interactivity and depth of content.

Most participants (about 60 percent) highlighted the **trainer's strong expertise and facilitation skill** as a key factor that supported their learning. Comments such as *"Sam has an amazing wealth of knowledge and is a super skilled practitioner,"* and *"Thought you all did a great job—thanks!!"* demonstrate that participants valued the trainer's knowledge base, clear communication, and approachable teaching style. Several participants remarked that the session was "excellent" and "exceeded expectations," underscoring that the instructional quality met or surpassed their professional development needs.

Roughly half of respondents expressed a desire for **more interactive, participant-driven learning opportunities** in future sessions. Comments such as *"Less lecture and PowerPoint, more utilization of expertise in the room,"* and *"More input from attendees on topics relevant to our work given similar goals,"* indicate that participants recognized the collective expertise among peers and wanted more opportunities to learn from one another. This feedback aligns with adult education principles that emphasize active participation, dialogue, and the co-construction of knowledge among experienced professionals. Participants clearly appreciated that the trainer's

facilitation style made room for discussion, but several encouraged an even greater shift toward peer exchange and collaborative analysis.

About 40 percent of participants commented on **content structure, pacing, and engagement strategies**, suggesting small adjustments to maintain energy and attention during longer content blocks. For example, one respondent wrote, *“The hour blocks of content are difficult to absorb; I recommend breaking up the content somehow (mini-quiz, turn and talk, stand and stretch, whole-group response techniques).”* Others echoed this idea, recommending more frequent pauses for questions or short activities. Comments such as *“A bit more listening than I’d like (but a good presenter!)”* highlight that participants remained engaged but saw opportunities to incorporate varied instructional methods to sustain focus throughout the day.

Approximately one quarter of respondents noted a desire for **deeper coverage of specific content areas**, particularly the “Beyond Crisis Thinking” module and analytical tools introduced during the session. Feedback such as *“There was a lot to cover under Beyond Crisis Thinking; we only scratched the surface,”* and *“Expand the lecture session—types of analysis, rubrics, and strategies were valuable,”* indicates strong enthusiasm for the content and interest in advanced, follow-up professional learning opportunities. This suggests that participants viewed the workshop as a foundation for continued growth rather than a standalone event.

Around 20 percent of respondents mentioned **logistical or environmental factors** that could enhance the learning experience, including room setup, visuals, and comfort. Comments included, *“It was hard to see the screen where I was sitting,”* *“The room was a bit cold,”* and *“Fishbowl participants should all be facing the audience.”* Others provided practical suggestions such as *“Print our slide deck prior to meeting for easy note-taking”* or *“Post clearer signage for the meeting room.”* These notes were minor and constructive, aimed at optimizing accessibility and participant comfort rather than expressing dissatisfaction.

Taken together, the trainer feedback reflects a **highly positive overall evaluation** with nuanced, professional insight into how future sessions could build upon this strong foundation. Participants were clearly satisfied with the trainer’s expertise and the quality of instruction but eager for **more participatory formats, interactive learning strategies, and extended opportunities for deeper exploration** of complex topics. The tone of the comments demonstrates both appreciation and investment—participants were engaged enough to think critically about how to maximize the impact of similar professional development experiences in the future.